

## THE INLAND BIRD BANDING ASSOCIATION

BY O. A. STEVENS, SECRETARY

### ORGANIZATION AND EARLY HISTORY

THE Inland Bird Banding Association was organized at Chicago, Illinois in October, 1922, during a meeting of the American Ornithologists' Union. Organization was brought about largely through the efforts of William I. Lyon of Waukegan, Illinois, who had previously sent out letters to about seventy-five people whom he thought would be interested in the project. Dr. S. Prentiss Baldwin<sup>1</sup> was chosen the first president and Mr. Lyon, secretary. The history of the Association continued to center around the work of Mr. Lyon, who later became president and, until his death on June 13, 1938, was always its chief promoter.

In March, 1922, a few months before the Association was organized, Mr. Lyon began editing the "Bird Banding Department" of *The Wilson Bulletin* and continued to do so until June, 1928, with two to eight pages in nearly every number. In the first issue there was an account of the organization of the New England Bird Banding Association in January of that year. In the December number of 1922 (pp. 226-33) "a copy of the minutes of the first activities of the Inland Bird Banding Association" appeared, telling of the organization as described in the above paragraph.<sup>2</sup> In September of the following year it reported the organization of the Eastern Bird Banding Association. In the same number Mr. Lyon presented a list of birds banded in the Inland district, of interest in comparison with the many thousands of birds banded annually at the present time. Fifty-one people had banded 5818 birds, of which 2481 were by Mr. Lyon, Mr. W. S. McCrea of Chicago, and Mr. M. J. Magee of Sault Ste Marie, Michigan.

The December number of 1923 reported a convention held in Indianapolis with the Indiana Audubon Society and the Nature Study Club of Indiana on November 2. In this report is a "Bibliography of Bird Banding in America" (more important papers only) by Dr. Baldwin, with the comment that he had supplied copies of most of them to the United States Biological Survey in sufficient quantity to distribute to all people holding banding permits. Included also is a list of the regional associations with their officers and territories.

In June, 1929 the Association began the publication of *Inland Bird Banding News*, a quarterly mimeographed publication. The first two volumes contained only three numbers each. Mr. Lyon was president and Professor J. W. Stack, secretary. The December, 1929 issue reported upon a meeting held in St. Louis, Missouri, November 9-10. The next meeting was held at Cleveland, Ohio, December 30, 1930, at

<sup>1</sup> See an account of Dr. Baldwin by Kendeigh, *Auk*, 57: 1-2, 1940.

<sup>2</sup> The writer still has on hand a few separates of this article.

which time Edward R. Ford was elected secretary. Mr. Ford continued in this capacity until November, 1938, when he was succeeded by the present Secretary.

The tenth annual meeting was held in Chicago with the Chicago Ornithological Society and the Illinois Audubon Society on November 27-28, 1931. Meetings continued to be held in Chicago until 1937. Business meetings without special programs were held in conjunction with the meetings of the Wilson Club in 1938 and 1939. For the 1934 meeting, the present Secretary prepared a map of the 297 banding stations in the United States and Canada at which had been banded more than 100 birds during the preceding year. This was published in the January, 1935 number of *Bird-Banding*.

#### W. I. LYON AND THE INLAND ASSOCIATION

The history of the Association up to 1938 is largely a story of the tireless efforts of Mr. Lyon to extend and develop the study of birds by means of banding. He contributed extensively of his time and funds to this end. His annual tours, covering many states, always included visits to other banding stations. He had a form printed on which the number of birds of a species banded each month in the year could be recorded for many years, and repeatedly urged the use of this to systematize station records. He also undertook to furnish traps and other supplies for banders (*I. B. B. News*, 4, No. 1: 12), and we suspect that he was responsible for an extensive distribution of publications by the Association (*Ibid.*, p. 14). Reports of his summer banding expeditions appeared regularly from 1931 onward, though the one for that year, on which 4657 birds were banded, was said to be the eighth expedition (*Ibid.*, 3 No. 3: 7). In later years his Cowbird studies occupied much of his attention (*Ibid.*, 7, No. 1: 7; 9, No. 2: 9; 10, No. 2: 3).

One of Mr. Lyon's largest projects was one to develop interest in bird banding in the Latin American countries. We find a statement (*Ibid.*, June, 1929: 5) that forty volumes of collected papers on bird banding had been bound and distributed by Dr. Baldwin to as many museums of the principal countries of South America. An illustrated three page article was prepared and published in the January, 1936 issue of *Revista Rotaria*, the Spanish magazine published for Rotary International. A similar article previously appeared in *The Rotarian*. Another appeared in the Spanish and Portuguese editions of the *Bulletin of the Pan-American Union* for February, 1938.

#### OTHER ACTIVE MEMBERS

Among others who were specially active in the early work of the Association mention should be made of M. J. Magee, J. W. Stack, and E. R. Ford. Mr. Magee has completed ten years of service as its treasurer, and many others have been faithful contributors. Of the fifty-two

persons who assembled for the meeting in 1922, seven are still among the members. Present available records show at least the following thirty persons have been members for ten years:

J. F. Brenckle	Mrs. B. F. Myers (Mrs. F. W. Commons)
Oscar M. Bryens	Samuel E. Perkins, III
K. Christofferson	T. S. Roberts
Miss Marion Clow	Frank W. Robl
Leon J. Cole	A. F. Satterthwait
E. R. Ford	Mrs. Elizabeth A. Satterthwait
Christian J. Goetz	A. R. Shearer
Mrs. Marjorie Lee Guest	Frank Smith
H. H. Hayes	J. W. Stack
F. H. Herrick	O. A. Stevens
Paul Wm. Hoffman	H. L. Stoddard
Geo. W. Luther	Mrs. John A. Thompson
M. J. Magee	George Wagner
E. A. McIlhenny	George Stewart Wolfram
Arthur D. Moore	
Mrs. Blanche L. Morton	

#### TERRITORIAL SCOPE AND AIMS OF THE INLAND ASSOCIATION

The Inland Association's territory is a large one, reaching from Saskatchewan, Michigan, and Ohio on the north to Alabama and Texas on the south. Both the Inland and Western Associations have claimed Alberta, which lies in migration routes of both regions. Of the total number of banding permits held at the end of 1938, slightly less than half were in the Inland territory. Of this number 48 per cent were in the four states, Illinois, Ohio, Michigan and Wisconsin, which also had 60 per cent of the present Inland membership according to figures of 1939. The prairie states and southern states are poorly represented in numbers, but the southern states have some of our most active stations.

Mr. Lyon's plan was to have in each state and province a councilor who would keep in touch with the banders of that area, an excellent plan when a suitable person can be found who will give his time to the work. Professor Stack promoted state meetings, which seem to have been successful and are still continuing in Michigan.

In general the aims of the Association are to increase the extent and efficiency of banding work in the Inland district. The Association serves as a clearing house for information regarding methods and results of trapping, supplementing the work of the Fish and Wild Life Service (formerly called the U.S. Bureau of Biological Survey) in circulating such material. The *Inland Bird Banding News* is intended to carry items of current interest and also to help bring together material for ultimate publication.

The design and operation of traps are always major problems. The nature of the surroundings of the stations is important, and a study

of these in respect to bird behavior is not only essential to the success of the station, but also is a contribution to our general knowledge. Thus descriptions of individual stations are always of interest to other workers, and any of them may contain something of definite value. Types of bait used and method of keeping records are essential details.

Many people begin banding as an early interest in ornithology and have, perhaps, no other literature available than that which they receive as cooperators with the Fish and Wildlife Service. The present writer feels that it is this group of people which the regional associations should help particularly. The beginner needs suggestions and aid of many kinds. References to other work and to other publications help lead him into an appreciation of the possibilities contained in bird study. The individual stations are widely scattered, but often a group will develop in a locality as a result of the interest aroused by the first one. Such a group increases both interest and efficiency. A larger proportion of the entire population of the locality is banded, and birds banded at one station frequently are retaken at one of the others.

The data furnished by the banding and recovery of individual birds comprise only a small part of the contributions of this method of study to ornithology. Large numbers of birds are handled, but many of them for only a few minutes or even seconds. Methods of study during this brief interval are as yet little developed but are of great importance. Failure to capture birds banded at other stations has been a disappointment to many operators, and the other possibilities of interesting and useful studies continually need to be brought to their attention. The frequent daily visits to the traps make possible observations upon behavior. Most of the large numbers banded during migration may not be heard of again, but their banding has furnished definite statistical evidence upon distribution and migration.

The Inland Association is composed of banders located in the area crossed by two of the major flyways as outlined by Frederick C. Lincoln, namely, the Mississippi and Central Flyways. It has great possibilities of aiding the study of birds in this large region. It aims to help collect and correlate the information secured at the different stations, and call attention to study projects which are under way, or to other problems which should be undertaken. The educational values of banding operations are tremendous, and cooperation among the workers of a region will help to develop these. Bird banding is one of our largest cooperative programs, and effective regional cooperation is essential to its usefulness.

FARGO, NORTH DAKOTA